Please replace the paragraphs indicated below with the following paragraphs. Marked-up versions showing the changes are attached.

The paragraph at p. 11, 3rd para., line 26 to p. 12, line 6:

The invention has for its object the generation of polynucleotide sequences liable to have advantageous properties as compared to the corresponding properties of reference sequences. The recombined polynucleotide sequences obtained at step (d) and possibly cloned are screened by any appropriate means in order to select the recombined polynucleotide sequences or the clones having advantageous properties as compared to the corresponding properties of the reference sequences. By advantageous property is understood to be, for example, the thermostability of an enzyme or its ability to function under conditions of pH or of temperature or of saline concentration more adapted to an enzymatic process than the control proteins usually used for said process. For example, such a process can be an industrial process to breakdown textile fibers or bleaching paper pulps or producing flavors in the dairy industry, the processes of biocatalysis for the synthesis by an enzymatic pathway of new therapeutic molecules, etc.

The paragraph at p. 17, 2nd para., lines 11-18:

The product of the five PCR was mixed and loaded on a 1% TBEagarose gel after migration and staining of the gel with ethidium bromide, the band at 2651 bp, corresponding to the *ponB* gene amplification product surrounded by two fragments of 26 bp and 90 bp respectively, was visualized by trans-illumination under ultraviolet, and cut out with a scalpel in order to be purified with the QIAquick system (QIAGEN). All the DNA thus purified was eluted in 120 µl of buffer T. The concentration of this DNA was approximately 100 ng/µl as measured by its absorbance at 260 nm.

The paragraph at p. 18, 4th para., lines 21-26:

50 µl of each of the ten PCR were mixed and loaded on a 1% TBE agarose gel. After migration and staining with ethidium bromide, the band at 2572 bp, corresponding to the amplification product of the genes of the ten mutants, was cut out with a scalpel and purified with the QIAquick system (QIAGEN). All the DNA thus purified was eluted in 120 µl of buffer T. The concentration of this DNA was approximately 100 ng/µl according to its absorbance at 260 nm.